

ITEMS FOR AND ABOUT THE FARMER

AUTHORITATIVE INTERVIEWS ON THE SUBJECT OF STANDARDIZATION

Farmer, Manufacturer and Editor Give Their Views on the Question of Standardizing the Manufacture of Farm Implements.

Standardization in the manufacture of farm implements, especially the breakable, wearable parts thereof, was the subject of a special interview with J. Lockie Wilson published in The Toronto World of March 11. For the benefit of our readers we give here, with the opinion of three men who are representative of the farmer, the manufacturer and the farm magazine, the remarks of L. H. Blachford, manager of the United Farmers' Co-operative Company; Thomas Findley, president of the Massey-Harris Co.; and of F. M. Chapman, editor of Farmers' Magazine, will form interesting reading to those interested in this important topic.

Would Benefit Farmer.
Interviewed with reference to this matter Mr. Blachford expressed himself as favoring the idea. He thought that such a measure would be a benefit to the farmer. Many farmers might have their decided preference for a certain make of machine, and this might be a difficult aspect of the problem to solve. He felt, however, that the cost of repairs would be reduced and that farmers would likely favor the idea.

He stated that there was no fundamental difference in the design of

a Verity plow from that of a Cockshutt or other well-known make for use under similar conditions; and yet a plow point for a Cockshutt plow would not fit a Verity plow. In consequence there was the opportunity presented to demand high prices for repairs, and the farmer felt that he was placed in an awkward relation to the manufacturer.

Idea Not Feasible.
Mr. Thomas Findley, president of the Massey-Harris Co., stated that in order to standardize the manufacture of farm implements it would be necessary for the government to take over the business of the manufacturers and establish a prohibitive tariff. From his long experience as a manufacturer he said that under such a system implements would cost the farmer one-third more than present prices.

Mr. Findley said that the history of farm implement manufacturers in the United States and Canada presented a clean and efficient record. No other industry had given such good service or had kept more abreast of the times in introducing improvements and rendering expert help to the farmer. The Massey-Harris Company spent \$100,000 yearly in main-

taining a department of experimentation, and all other reputable manufacturers in this line had similar departments for the purpose of improving their implements by means of new inventions, etc.

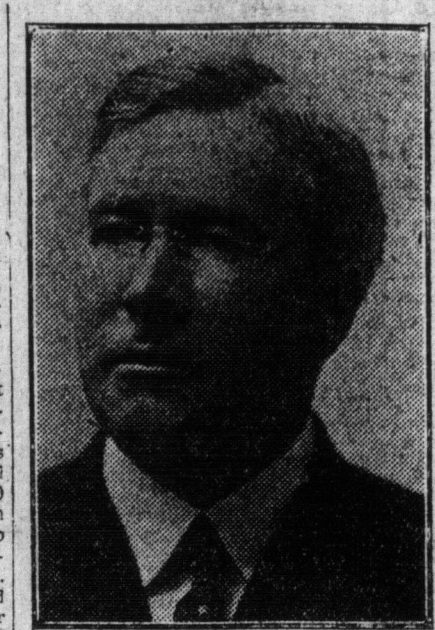
Would Stifle Initiative.
Unquestioned control initiative and competitive price would be killed, in Mr. Findley's opinion. The different manufacturers had standardized their methods and had secured a degree of efficiency that had reduced the cost of production to the minimum, and standardizing under government control would not further decrease the cost to the farmer.

Mr. Findley referred to the present prices as evidence of the low cost of farm implements due to competition between manufacturers. A binder or weighed approximately 2,000 pounds and cost but \$125. A mower weighed about 800 pounds and cost from \$60 to \$65. In what other line could such low average prices be found? Although the cost of raw material had increased in cases as high as 200 per cent, the sale price of the manufactured goods had been increased only 65 per cent, and that only in the present year due to the foresight of the manufacturers in ordering supplies ahead.

Tariff Not Solution.
Mr. Findley mentioned some interesting points bearing on the tariff question. He stated that some years ago when the duty was at the unnecessarily high figure of 35 per cent, there were a score of implement manufacturers in Ontario. These, however, engaged in a destructive price-cutting competition, with the result that only those firms who had established export trade were able to survive.

He also compared the binder and cream separator, the former of which is protected by a tariff, while the latter comes into Canada duty free. Mr. Findley ventured to say that a farmer would admit that a binder represented better value for the money than the separator. This was explained by the fact that keener competition was experienced by the binder manufacturer than by the separator manufacturer.

Different Selling Methods.
An important difference in the method of selling farm implements between Canada and the States was referred to by Mr. Findley. The American manufacturer sells his product to dealers outright. These dealers make



THOMAS FINDLEY, President, Massey-Harris Co.

varying profits according to local conditions, and prices vary in consequence. For instance, in Montana a binder costs \$20 more than it does in Alberta, Canada. On this side of the line the manufacturer sells direct to the farmer thru local agents, who secure a commission on whatever they sell. Prices are therefore standardized and vary only as they are affected by cost of transportation from the distributing centre. At the same time the agents are but seldom unable to give immediate delivery of repairs and they render expert service to the farmer.

With reference to the "Liberty" motor which was mentioned by Mr. Wilson as an example of standardization, Mr. Findley said that in this instance the government had given large orders to various manufacturers, which was sufficient to enable them to concentrate on producing a single part of the engine. These factories shipped their particular parts to a central assembly plant where the motor was completed. The manufacturers had a definite order of a sufficient volume as well as a patriotic incentive. This motor was also a war-time measure only and would not be manufactured for commercial purposes after the war. But the Canadian implement manufacturer has not concentrated business to enable him to concentrate on a portion of a standardized machine. Furthermore, it would be impracticable from a selling point of view.

Chapman Endorses Idea.
F. M. Chapman, editor of Farmers' Magazine, and who is also a farmer on his own account, expressed himself strongly in favor of the idea of standardization. He mentioned that well-digging pipes and knuckles were standardized, also plumbing and electric light fixtures. He felt that as a war-time measure farm implements should be standardized in their essential breakable parts. As an example, he stated that a binder might be standardized insofar as the sticks, bar, Pittman attachment, gearing and binding attachment were concerned, and that the manufacturer might keep the general design of his implement similar to his present individual taste.

Examples of loss thru lack of standardization were cited by Mr. Chapman. The Ross rifle would not carry the standard shell of the allied armies, and therefore was thrown into the discard as unserviceable.

The Tractor Example.
In the early history of the tractor movement heavy tractors made their appearance in western Canada. In many cases the manufacturers were mushroom concerns with not sufficient capital or experience. Consequently when their tractors were found to be unsuited for the purpose of the Canadian farmer these manufacturers went out of business. The farmers who had purchased tractors were unable to purchase repairs and the tractors became scrap iron and a heavy loss to the farmer.

This condition resulted in the demoralization of the tractor industry and it cost the reputable manufacturers much time and money to overcome this setback. If the tractors had been standardized under government supervision the farmers as well as the reputable manufacturers would have been protected from loss.

Western Farmer Desires It.
Mr. Chapman remarked that Western Canada felt the high cost of repairs more than Ontario, where cost of transportation was lower, and repairs were more readily obtained. He stated that the western farmer was much interested in the subject of standardizing the manufacture of the implements he purchases.

As evidence of the high cost of repairs under the present system, Mr. Chapman said that if one purchased a binder piece by piece the cost would be three or four times the price of the assembled implement. On the other hand a Ford car cost but comparatively little more when purchased as "repairs" than the price of the assembled car. Standardization was more in evidence in the manufacture of a Ford car than in that of a binder.

High Cost of Selling.
Speaking as a farmer and also as an employer of farm help, Mr. Chapman said that the cost of selling would be materially reduced thru standardizing the manufacture of implements. Under the existing conditions a great deal of the time of the farmer as well as that of the agent was unnecessarily taken up by arguing the merits of the particular machine which the agent was desirous of selling. Agents of several different machines would call two, three or more times in the effort to make the sale. The farmer, the crops and the agent would be losing the time thus taken up.

If there was a standard type of machine with all desirable improvements embodied in it under the supervision of a government commission of experts, the farmer would not have to take the word of an agent working for his commission, but would have the judgment of the government to guide him. He would merely purchase his binder as a city man does his electric light fixtures. When repairs were needed he could either borrow a part from his neighbor, if in a hurry, or he could purchase his repairs by telephone from his nearest dealer.

UNION HOURS

Now, here's a thing that wrecks my nerves and sets my head a-buzzin': Oh, will my hens keep laying eggs at ninety cents a dozen. Or will they quit and all contend—good, good! How shall I time it?
That hens must set at their set times in this uncertain climate?
—Tennyson J. Daft.

BEGINNING AND ENDING

A teacher of a rural school in Montana had asked her small charges to tell improvised stories, the exercise being designed to teach the children to express themselves and to train them in the use of language.

She called upon John, the stodgy one, for a story. He couldn't get started. Then she asked Jane, John's bright neighbor, to start a story for him.

"Once upon a time there was a little boy named Ooglesby," began Jane. "Now, John, you tell the story from there on," prompted the teacher.

"And Ooglesby died," said John. "Thereupon the class turned to weaving baskets, wherein John excels." —Country Gentleman.

RICHMOND HILL.

The Richmond Hill Farmers' Club will hold a social entertainment in the Masonic Hall on the evening of March 20.

Mrs. Milner, who is with Sydney A. Collis, pulled her first spring onions on March 4. They were very good and about an average of eight inches.

The College Farm sale of stock and implements held on the A. S. Rogers' farm last Wednesday was a success, and owing to the excellent condition of the stock, A. S. Rogers, the proprietor, should be pleased with the net \$4000 showing. Horses sold as high as \$225 and cows ran up to \$180.

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Farmers and others who have maple sugar outfits, even if they have not been in use for years, should put them to work this year. There is a sugar shortage, and Canadian maple trees should be made to produce to the maximum. So even if you haven't the most up-to-date equipment, tap all the trees you can and make the most of the facilities you have on hand. There'll be a good market for all the maple sugar and syrup produced.—The Brussels Post.

HARD TIMES?

Yes, these are hard times. We throw away ashes and soap. We raise dogs and buy hogs. We grow weeds and buy vegetables. We catch fish from a four dollar rod. We build school houses and send our children away from home to be educated. And last, but not least, we send our boys out with a forty dollar gun and a twenty dollar dog to hunt ten cent game. Yes, these are hard times, but whose fault is it? Don't place all the blame on the government and the trusts.

RENNIE'S War Time Production Seeds

THERE must be no "slackers" this year, either among the seeds or the growers. Every man and woman with garden space, must produce to the limit of his or her ability. And that is why Rennie's seeds are so essential—live, vigorous seeds from tested stock, to ensure record crops.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS — Amager	Pkt.	1/2 Oz.	Oz.	1 lb.
Market	.10		.90	2.75
CABBAGE — Rennie's First Crop	.10		.75	2.25
CABBAGE — Early Jersey Wakefield (Improved)	.05		.60	1.75
CAULIFLOWER — Rennie's Danish Drouth-Resisting	.15 & .25	1.00	3.50	10.00
CELESTY — Paris Golden Yellow	.15	.60	2.00	
Extra Select	.10		.60	1.75
TOMATO — Bonny Best (Original)	.10		.75	2.50
Rennie's Improved Beefsteak	.10		.75	2.50

FLOWER SEEDS	Pkt.
New Giant Asterum — Mixed Colors	.15
Rennie's XXX Giant Comet Asters — Mixed	.10
Dreer's Peerless Pink Aster	.15
Early Blooming Cosmos — Mixed	.10
Rennie's XXX Exhibition Mixture Pansy	.25
Rennie's XXX Prize Ruffled Single Petunia — Mixture	.25
Rennie's XXX Large Flowering Globe Stock — Mixture	.20
Rennie's XXX Mammoth Verbena — Mixture	.10
Giant Zinnia — Mixed	.15

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ANNOUNCEMENT

Ontario Department of Agriculture

SPRING WHEAT

Every farmer as far as possible should plant a few acres of spring wheat this year. There will be a great need for all the wheat which can be grown on this continent.

To assist those who desire to sow wheat, and in view of the fact that there is no large local supply of wheat, the Department of Agriculture has purchased 50,000 bushels from the Seed Purchasing Commission, Ottawa, and it will be available to farmers of this Province. It is wheat of the Marquis variety, which is most highly recommended for sowing in this Province. It was purchased under the supervision of the Federal Seed Commissioner in the West, and has been re-cleaned and put up in two-bushel bags. The price has been fixed at \$2.74 per bushel, delivered any station in Ontario. This price merely covers the original cost of the grain and the cost of handling and transportation. Orders should be placed as early as possible with the County Offices of the Department of Agriculture throughout the Province or direct with the Markets Branch, Department of Agriculture, Toronto. All grain is sold subject to cash with order.

TRACTORS

The Canada Food Board, Ottawa, has purchased 1,000 Ford tractors for distribution among the farmers of Canada at cost price. They have asked the Provincial Department of Agriculture to co-operate with them in the distribution in the respective Provinces. In accordance with this arrangement this Department is now prepared to accept orders for these tractors for delivery in this Province. The price is \$750, f.o.b. Dearborn, Mich., duty free. Deliveries begin under the contract on the 1st of April, and will continue thereafter as rapidly as possible in the order in which orders are received. Cheque must be forwarded with order, and should be made payable to the Ontario Department of Agriculture.

MAPLE SYRUP

The first crop from Ontario land is maple syrup. At no time has this crop been as important as this year. The sugar situation has emphasized the need of developing to the fullest extent the supply of maple syrup and maple sugar, which may be gathered this spring. Attention is now directed to the subject in the hope that all those who have a maple bush will not neglect it this year.

BACKYARD GARDENING KEEP A PIG

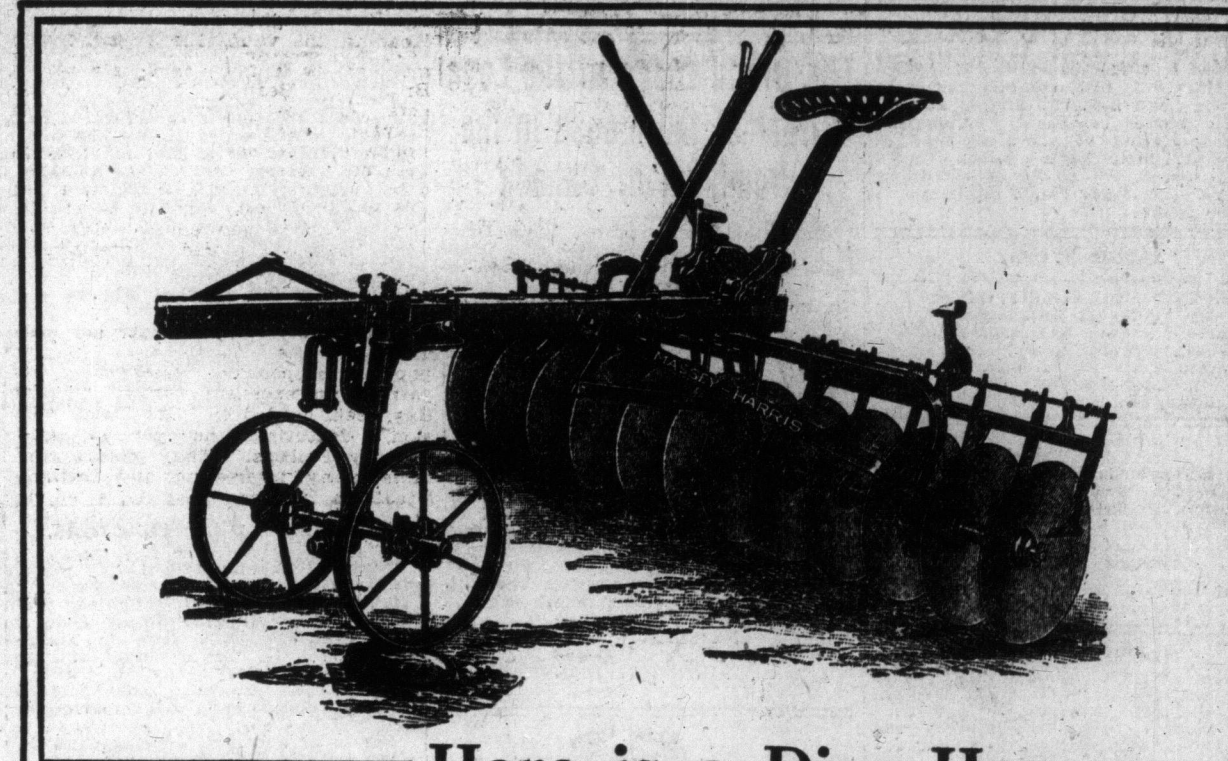
Every effort should be made again this season to cultivate all the backyard gardens and vacant land available in the Province. Local municipal organizations and other bodies should take up the subject at once and see that there is an effective organization in every municipality to look after this work. A large quantity of foodstuffs can be produced in this way by utilizing labor which might not otherwise be employed in production, and the more foodstuffs produced from this source the more there will be available from other sources for export overseas.

In addition to the production of garden produce, backyards in towns and villages may be used to add to the meat supply by pork production. This plan has been encouraged in Great Britain for some time past, and can be adopted in Ontario to good advantage. A special publication is being issued dealing with this subject, and will be distributed to all interested.

For further particulars or information on any subject pertaining to production apply to the

Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.

W. H. HEARST, Minister of Agriculture, Toronto.



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